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BIENNIAL REPORT

1961 ··· 1962

STATE PARKS DIVISION

MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

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STATE PARKS DIVISION

1961 - 1962

Hon. Tim Babcock, Governor
State of Montana
Capitol Building
Helena, Montana

Members

39th Montana Legislature

Dear Governor Babcock:

Transmitted herewith is the Biennial Report of the State Parks Division of the Montana Highway Commission.

The report covers the activities of the Parks Division during the current biennium and includes recommendations for the consideration of the Governor and the Legislature.

Yours very truly,

STATE PARKS DIVISION
MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Roy L. Sorrells, Chairman
S. N. Halvorson, Vice Chairman
George Gosman
Ted James
Otis Waters

Ashley C. Roberts, Director

MONTANA HIGHWAY COMMISSION

STATE PARKS DIVISION

1961 - 1963

BIENNIAL REPORT TO THE GOVERNOR AND LEGISLATURE

By act of the 1953 Legislature, The State Park Commission, as such, was dissolved and the powers, duties and activities of the Park Commission were transferred to the State Highway Commission. The transfer was effective on July 1, 1953, and since that time the park system has operated as the Parks Division of the State Highway Commission.

PURPOSE

During the nine and one-half years the State Highway Commission has been charged with state park affairs, the Commission has been very much aware of the purpose for which the state park system is set up. To bring this directly to your attention we should like to quote the law:

> "PURPOSE: That for the purpose of conserving the scenic, historic, archaeologic, scientific and recreational resources of the state, and of providing for their use and enjoyment, thereby contributing to the cultural, recreational and economic life of the people and their health, the State Highway Commission is hereby vested with the powers and duties hereinafter set forth."

It will be noted from the "Purpose" that we are to accomplish three major tasks -- namely: Conserve the scenic, historic, archaeologic, scientific and recreational resources of the state; Provide for their use and enjoyment; and Contribute to the cultural, recreational and economic life of the people and their health.

These are worthwhile objectives and we have attempted to carry them out to the very best of our ability.

OUR PRESENT STATE PARK SYSTEM

The state park system consists of twenty-six (26) units at the present time. These units range in size from 1 acre to 2,770 acres. This would bring the average size for the 26 units to somewhere near 400 acres.

The acquisition of these units in the park system is rather interesting. With the exception of 120 acres of land the Park Division owns in Bridger Canyon north of Bozeman, all other units of the park system have been given to the state or are under lease from the Federal Government at no cost to the state. The result is that we do not have what could be termed a "planned" state park system. On the other hand, we have been quite fortunate in these acquisitions in that they do, for the most part, follow along the lines of our objectives. In addition, we do have fair geographic distribution.

It is interesting to note the "Purposes" that the various units in the system are serving. We mentioned that we have twenty-six units in the system. Six of these units are what we call state monuments because the main attraction is that they feature an historic event in Montana's history: BANNACK STATE MONUMENT . . . Montana's first territorial capital; MISSOURI RIVER HEADWATERS STATE MONUMENT . . . the headwaters of the Missouri River as well as a major stop-over of the Lewis and Clark expedition; CHIEF JOSEPH BATTLEFIELD OF THE BEAR'S PAW . . . where Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce fought his last battle. These are just a few examples of the historic sites in our existing state park system.

At CANYON FERRY RESERVOIR and TIBER RESERVOIR we have what we term recreation areas. Both of these reservoirs provide all types of out-of-doors recreation . . . boating, swimming, fishing, camping and picnicking. There is considerable space available at each of these reservoirs and they serve large numbers of people.

At MAKOSHIKA STATE PARK near Glendive is featured one of the most outstanding badlands areas in the United States. MEDICINE ROCKS STATE PARK near Ekalaka has unique sandstone formations that are unlike anything to be seen anywhere. LOST CREEK STATE PARK near Anaconda has interesting formations that are very scenic as well as of interest to geology students. Our parks in the Flathead area are mostly scenic in nature and provide public access to Flathead Lake, Whitefish Lake and Bitterroot Lake.

The feature park of the system is the LEWIS AND CLARK CAVERNS STATE PARK. Here we have the largest limestone caverns in the Pacific Northwest and we find that they are becoming a major attraction in Montana. During the 1963 season we had 51,970 paid admissions at the Caverns.

The public use of our parks is heavy in those units that are exposed to centers of population or to heavy tourist traffic. We can only guess at the annual attendance, but estimate it to be about 375,000 for the 1962 season.

GUIDELINES

In carrying out the objectives of the state park system we have some guidelines we follow. We believe our park system should provide:

1. Picnic areas for the spend-the-day parties.
2. Parks that provide swimming, boating and fishing facilities.
3. Parks that have accommodations for the week-end campers and those that want to stay a little longer. Heavy camping and trailer use is one of our biggest problems.
4. Parks that preserve our best scenic attractions.
5. Parks equipped with facilities for the training of our youth.
6. Parks equipped with interpretative guides (Museums, nature trails, etc.) to increase appreciation of our recreational resources.

GUIDELINES (continued)

7. Parks that preserve and interpret our historic attractions.
8. Parks that will preserve our scientific and archaeological resources.
9. Parks that have good geographic distribution throughout the state.
10. Parks that are properly maintained and operated that will bespeak the pride we have in our recreational and historic resources.

ACTIVITIES

NEW PARKS

During the biennium the Parks Division added CHIEF PLENTY COUPS MEMORIAL to the state park system. Chief Plenty Coups of the Crow Indians left 190 acres of his land "in trust" to the Big Horn County Commissioners to be administered for the use of Indians and Whites alike. The Big Horn County Commissioners transferred the "Trust Deed" to the Kiwanis Club of Billings and, in May of this year, the "Trust Deed" was transferred to the State Parks Division. Within the 190 acres comprising the memorial to Chief Plenty Coups, there are 150 acres of farmland, 40 acres for recreation purposes, the burial ground of Plenty Coups and two of his wives and a small museum containing some of the belongings and trappings of Chief Plenty Coups.

The Parks Division feels that this is a valuable addition to the state park system.

A Memorandum of Understanding between the State Park Division and the Bureau of Reclamation was entered into in 1962 whereby the Park Division will administer the recreation areas at CLARK'S CANYON RESERVOIR. This added another recreation area to the park system, but Clark's Canyon will not be in active operation until 1964 at the earliest.

Improvements to access roads were carried on at CANYON FERRY RESERVOIR, WHITEFISH LAKE STATE PARK, BITTERROOT LAKE STATE PARK, FLATHEAD LAKE STATE PARK, HELL CREEK STATE PARK, LEWIS AND CLARK CAVERNS, LOST CREEK STATE PARK, MEDICINE ROCKS STATE PARK, THOMPSON FALLS STATE PARK, AND WEST SHORE STATE PARK.

New sanitary facilities were placed at all of the parks in the Flathead area.

New picnic tables and fireplaces were added at many of the parks.

A $73,000.00 contract for the installation of basic facilities at Canyon Ferry and Tiber Reservoirs was completed in 1961. This contract was entered into between the Bureau of Reclamation and the State Parks Division . . . the State Parks Division installed the facilities and were reimbursed for the full cost by the Bureau of Reclamation.

New interpretation programs were set up at Bannack State Monument and Missouri River Headwaters State Monument.

Boat launching ramps were installed at West Shore State Park and at Flathead Lake State Park. Temporary ramps were provided for Hell Creek State Park and James Kipp State Park.

A new camping area at Lewis and Clark Caverns was developed. A second camping area development has been started and is to be completed in 1963.

New change houses were constructed at Flathead Lake State Park and at Yellow Bay State Park.

Good maintenance was emphasized in all state parks.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance at the various state parks during the 1962 season was the heaviest in the history of the State Parks Division. The Lewis and Clark Caverns had 51,970 paid admissions which represents about a ten percent increase over the 1961 season . . . and, incidentally, making this the biggest season in the history of the Caverns.

ATTENDANCE (continued)

Exact attendance at other parks can only be guessed at because we do not have entrance counters. From personal observations, from sample counts and from information passed along by our caretakers and maintenance men we know that our park attendance has shown a steady increase every year and the 1962 season indicates the heaviest use of any year to date. Sample counts at CANYON FERRY RESERVOIR indicates that there were a number of days this summer when the number of people counted were somewhere between 3,500 and 4,000. TIBER RESERVOIR counted some 3,000 or 4,000 people on the Labor Day week end and up to 1,500 people at Sanford Park at Tiber during busy week ends. All of the parks in the Flathead area were busy and overuse was evident in particular at YELLOW BAY STATE PARK. BANNACK STATE MONUMENT had the busiest day in its history (perhaps even including gold rush days) when the Centennial Celebration was held on August 5, 1962.

The parks in eastern Montana also were busy. Both Makoshika and Medicine Rocks State Parks showed increased use. Hell Creek, Rock Creek and James Kipp State Parks held about the same due, in part at least, to inclement weather and bad roads at times during the travel season.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee of the State Parks Division was augmented to include individuals and areas of the state that have not been previously represented. The committee now consists of twenty-four members representing the various state parks and communities throughout Montana. It is to be understood that this committee is purely voluntary and the members serve without renumeration and attend meetings at their own expense. The two meetings are held each year to review Park Division activities and offer suggestions and comments with respect to our operations.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE (continued)

In their own communities and with respect to the particular parks they are concerned with, the individual members of the committee work diligently and unceasingly. The results have been to the benefit of the park system and their efforts are very much appreciated by the State Highway Commission. The committee will continue operating.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Under the administration of the State Highway Commission, the State Parks Division has had two very busy and successful years. We have pointed out that the attendance at all state parks has increased every year and we look for this trend to continue. We believe that our available dollars have been put to work effectively and we take a certain amount of pride in our operations. In looking to the future we recommend to the Governor and to the Legislature as follows:

1. The present state park system should be up-graded as rapidly as possible and the necessary facilities be improved and added to accomplish this objective.
2. The state park system should undergo an orderly expansion, keeping our basic purposes in mind at all times. In order to do this we should:
    a. Acquire additional historic sites as rapidly as possible in order to preserve our historic heritage.
    b. Acquire and set aside additional scenic and recreational areas in order that they may be preserved inviolate for all time to come.
    c. Provide the necessary maintenance and facilities so that the general public may enjoy these areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

3. The State Highway Commission proposes to:

   a. Establish Ranger classification for certain Park Division employees. The purpose of this classification will be to enforce laws as well as rules and regulations of the State Parks Division. This will be accomplished within the framework of existing law.

   b. Time limitations will be set up for camping and trailer use in all state parks. This will also be accomplished within the framework of existing law.

   c. The Legislature will be asked to remove the present ceiling on expenditures from the 205 STATE PARK FUND. The Parks Division would like to have this ceiling removed in order that excess funds may be made available for expenditures during the last six months of the current biennium.

We believe the State Parks Division operations have been very economical and successful during the past two years and we intend to continue this type of operation. We are appreciative of the good work performed by the members of the State Parks Advisory Board. The work and interest of these folks has resulted in many improvements at the parks that might otherwise have not been accomplished.

We believe the people of Montana are interested in a first class state park system and want to see it grow and expand to the point where a system will be in operation that everyone will take pride in during the years to come. With the help and cooperation of the Governor and the Legislature we hope to accomplish that goal.

Respectfully submitted,

MONTANA STATE HIGHWAY COMMISSION

Roy L. Sorrells, Chairman

Stanley N. Halvorson, Vice Chairman

Otis S. Waters

George M. Gosman

Ted James

Ashley C. Roberts, State Parks Director

	FISCAL YEAR 1961 - 1962 (ESTIMATED)	1963 BIENNIUM REQUEST	
		1963 - 1964	1964 - 1965
SALARIES AND WAGES	$ 80,000	$130,000	$140,000
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE	25,000	60,000	60,000
TRAVEL	3,000	10,000	10,000
CAPITOL	12,000	100,000	100,000
TOTALS	$120,000	$300,000	$310,000

	FISCAL YEAR 1961 - 1962 (ESTIMATED)	1963 BIENNIUM REQUEST	
		1963-1964	1964-1965
SALARIES AND WAGES			
Salaries	$ 70,000	$115,000	$122,500
Employee Benefits	10,000	15,000	17,500
Totals	$ 80,000	$130,000	$140,000
OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE			
Office Supplies and Services - Tel. & Tel., postage, dues, supplies, printing, bonds, subscriptions	$ 2,500	$ 10,000	$ 10,000
Insurance	600	2,000	2,000
Auto Expense	2,500	5,000	5,000
Repairs, Replacements, Operations, paint, lumber, janitor supplies fencing, gasoline, oil, misc. supplies -	18,200	40,500	40,500
Utilities	1,200	2,500	2,500
Totals	$ 25,000	$ 60,000	$ 60,000
TRAVEL			
In-State	$ 3,000	$ 8,000	$ 8,000
Out-of-State	-0-	2,000	2,000
Totals	$ 3,000	$ 10,000	$ 10,000

	FISCAL YEAR 1961 - 1962 (ESTIMATED)	1963 BIENNIUM REQUEST	
		1963-1964	1964-1965
CAPITAL			
New Vehicles	$ 2,000	$ 20,000	$ 20,000
Office Equipment	500	1,500	1,000
Buildings & Improvements Sanitary facilities, picnic tables, fireplaces, water systems, signs, change houses, custodial bldgs., Shelter bldgs., Area Headquarters buildings, workshop buildings, new campgrounds, parking areas, cavern improvements -	$ 9,500	$ 50,000	$ 40,000
Land Purchases	-0-	28,500	29,000
Totals	$ 12,000	$100,000	$ 90,000
TOTAL ALL EXPENDITURES	$120,000	$300,000	$310,000